

DEVELOPMENTS



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MCC meets nearly every Thursday
1st Thursday: Competition
2nd Thursday: Digital Class
3rd Thursday: Program & Business
4th Thursday: Carl & Tom's Classes
for Enthusiastic Photographers

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www.MemphisCameraClub.org

The Pursuit of Excellence

- Barry Siegel

I was watching an interview of James Taylor on television recently, and he stated that songwriting was a sense of both joy and deep frustration. Well, that really hit home when thinking about my own photography. I guess it applies to a myriad of artistic pursuits. Each small joyful improvement in my own work seems to pale in comparison to a multitude of really accomplished photographers, both current and deceased. I feel like Greek mythology's King Sisyphus pushing the rock up the mountain, only to fall back each time he nears the summit. But many times it's the journey itself which is the most fulfilling if you can look past the frustration. And what if I was unlucky enough to actually attain my goal.....a perfect portfolio of awe inspiring prints. Then what would I do. I guess I'd have to give up photography and find a new hobby (perhaps addiction would be a better word!). While I'm on the subject of frustration, recently I was shooting some concert photos. Is there some law that says the lead person in the band must wear white while all the other band members black? And why not paint the walls black behind the band for good measure. If that isn't enough, lets shine our one 50 gazillion watt spotlight at the lead member, and leave the rest of the band in complete darkness. But I do have to give a nod to those titans of tenacity like Tom Furlotte, who used to try this shooting film in the old days (I mean at least three years ago). And before we leave this frustration topic, lets talk about outdoor macro photography.....no lets not.....it would have to be in monthly installments over the next three years. Don't give up; keep searching for that little glimmer of joy.

Special Thanks to Ellen Cox

-Dave Masterson

For more than three years Ellen Cox has been the producer of our MCC newsletter, using her time and talent to help keep everyone informed of our great club and our special events! Please take the time to say "Thanks" to Ellen the next time you see her. She has been super, and I only hope that moving forward I and the Newsletter Committee can begin to meet the wonderful standard that she has set for our club publication.

Thank you, Ellen!

January Guest Speaker, Johnathan Postal

-Blair Ball

Johnathan Postal was born in New York City. He spoke about defining and creating a body of work. As an editor in previous job assignments he reviewed numerous portfolios and found the successful ones were focused on a particular body of work (i.e. put landscape with landscape) which included around 20 photos.

Jonathan shared these photographers whom he has studied which have influenced his body of work. Robert Franks – *The Americas*; Henri Cartier-Bresson – *The Decisive Moment*; Lee Friedlander; Garry Winogrand.

Jonathan gained his first start in photography when attending the San Francisco Art Institute where he earned a BFA in photography. After his degree he returned to NYC where he worked for *Soho Weekly News* as a photographer. He also freelanced for such publications as *Vanity Fair*, *Rolling Stone*, *Guitar World*, *The New York Times*, and *Interview*. Postal then went to Milan to shoot fashion.

In Milan, he worked for *Vogue Vanity*, *Vogue Pelle*, *Amica*, and *Max*, as well as various advertising projects. Jonathan then relocated to London where he was associated with The Black and White Gallery. He continued to shoot editorial projects for *Tattler*, *She*, *Face*, and *Timeout*, as well as record and book covers, and ads for clients such as Max Factor, Caroline Charles. During this period, Postal also made trips to New York and Australia to shoot projects for *Time Life*, *YM*, *Liz Claiborne*, *WEA*, and *CBS Records*, among others. While in Australia, *Australian Professional Photographer* published a feature on him.

Since relocating to Memphis, he started exhibiting at the Cooper Street Gallery (now the Jay Etkin Gallery). He won the Memphis Arts Festival's Best of Photography award three times and is in the collection of both the City of Memphis and the City of Nashville. After working as the Creative Director of *Eye Magazine*, and being honored with an ADDI for his work for The Humane Society, Postal spent five years as the Photo Editor and photographer of *Towery Publications*. Postal was then hired by the *New Times* and moved to volatile Miami, Florida where he worked as staff photographer and taught

photography at the Miami International University of Art & Design. Jonathan Postal is now working out of Memphis Tennessee.

Johnathan shared with us three bodies of work.

1. *Faith* – Shot with a 35mm camera and B&W film. Various churches around the country shot with natural light, including the legendary singer Al Green and his church.
2. *Work 9 to 5* - A recent assignment for Memphis Magazine, he shot various places and people at work in the Memphis area. The photos were shot digitally both in color and B&W.
3. *Sub Cultures* – Shown at a Seattle gallery these photos were taken around the country in B&W with a 35 mm camera. The key to photographing this group is to gain their trust over a period of time allowing Jonathan to capture some edgy photos.

Jonathan's other bodies of work can be found at his website www.jonathanpostal.com

Editor's Note

The following is the first in a three-part series on the topic of judging. This month's article is by Pattie Possel. Next month's article will be by Beverly Hammond, and April's article will be by Bob Laster.

Judging, How Hard Is It, Anyway?

Patti Possel

Sitting in the hot seat of judging is an honor, a privilege and sometimes a hardship. It is much easier to be an announcer perched in the box-seat high above the front row calling out the: "Didn't you see that's...?" and the "I would have given that's"... if I were a judge. However, the reality is: being a judge is hard!

For those that do not realize it, each judge is given approximately 5 seconds to view a print, before it is moved onto to the next judge. There is approximately 15 seconds total viewing time before a score must be rendered. Think about it: five seconds to totally see everything in a print/slide that someone else has meticulously labored over for hours. A judge has five seconds to see all that is good and all that needs improvement. They must formulate not only a judgment i.e. a score; but, be ready to articulate why they gave that score and maybe even defend and justify that score to the other judges, if challenged. Then there is the

pressure to say things in a positive manner. I know that does not sound hard, but it is much easier to be negative.

Negativity is the next subject. Just as it is hard for judges to think in positive manners, it also seems to be difficult for the participants. I believe everyone who enters, tries to do their best. One may or may not see the flaws in their work. Often, images are very personal and have sentimental meaning. Maybe the image was shot while on a special trip. Maybe the image is shot after many hours of patient waiting for the “perfect moment”. Maybe the image was a particular challenge and one spent many, many hours enhancing it in Photoshop. Regardless, every image has intrinsic value to the maker.

The true challenge is for every artist to be objective. Once presented, an image is opened for interpretation. The challenge then becomes did the artist effectively convey the thought, the feeling, the mood, or the moment that they wished. Sometimes, the artist wins and sometimes the point is missed. Sometimes the point is understood, but the image has many technical flaws. It is much easier to talk about technical issues than interpretational issues. “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” We all have talent. Listening to the judge’s comments can help us to hone our craft, especially if our images have technical flaws. Interpretational conflicts or differences of opinion can open the artists’ eyes to how the general public may receive their work.

The judges are just peers who are trying to help you improve your skills. If you feel your score was too low, I would like to suggest that you take notes, especially if your image was critiqued. Then, take a day or two to think about it. Review your image and try to see it as the judges saw it. If you are carrying “a chip on your shoulder” with thoughts like, they just don’t like me, my work, or my genera: SERIOUSLY, LET THAT GO! If you can not rationalize why the score was what was rendered, and you are not in the black-hole of self-pity and you want to improve or have understanding of your score, then fire an e-mail off to the judges, include the title and the image and ask them for their critique. Of course, be nice about it and ask in a positive way. Also, please keep in mind that everyone has day jobs and it may take a little bit for the judges to get back to you. We all enjoy photography and in keeping with our mission

statement, we are here to learn, to teach and to farther the development of photographic interests.

Upcoming Speakers

-Blair Ball

We will have some exciting speakers in the coming months. The Programs Committee, composed of Tom Richey, Tom Furlotte, Bruce Johnson, and Jim Nazzaro, is working hard to bring us an exciting array of speakers this year.

February – Barry Siegel, *Cuba II* Our very own MCC President will be presenting his exciting and informative presentation on Cuba part II.

March – Richard Ramsey, *Portraits* You are invited to **bring your portraits to this meeting and be prepared for some honest critiquing from Richard.** You will grow and learn quite a bit from his knowledge and expertise. He is one of the most highly awarded portrait photographers in the state of Tennessee, and has been honored ten times with the prestigious title of “Photographer of the Year”.

April – Uttam Shah, *Alaska* One of our very own MCC members who travels a great deal will be presenting a wonderful array of pictures from his recent trip to Alaska.

August – Mary Hewes, *Portrait* Mary is one of the premier portrait photographers in the city of Memphis. Be prepared to learn and grow in your ability to take excellent portraits.

2nd Half of Year. Tom Fox a professional photographer and member of MCC will be presenting his third book, “The Nature of Excellence”, which will be published this June. His excellence in fine art will be a blessing. Stay tuned for the month he will be speaking.

The Digital Revolution

-Tom Furlotte

Photography began as a scientific experiment with chemical technology. Its technical nature kept the process more of a curiosity and craft and less of an art form. Seventy-five years after the first photograph people were still arguing whether photography should be considered an art. Early photographic processes were tedious and time-consuming, performed with dangerous chemicals and fragile glass plates. A single

exposure took minutes. Technology improved the speed of exposures into the realm of fractions of a second. Flexible based films made multiple exposure rolls possible. Smaller cameras made photography portable and candid. Edwin Land made possible pictures in a minute. Auto exposure came to the SLR in 1967 with the Konica Auto-reflex. Auto focus made sharp results easier for the beginner. KIS put a mini-lab on every corner with film processed and printed in an hour.

Then digital cameras made instantaneous imaging a reality. Digital photography came into its own much faster and technology advanced more rapidly than any of the pundits anticipated. Today digital cameras far outsell film-based ones. There are generations of film cameras still in use and they probably will continue to be used in the Art form of photography. But the masses have adopted the digital camera and taken it to their heart.

The immediacy of the digital image is its strong draw. Lighting, exposure, composition, facial expression and every other variable can instantly be analyzed in the digital image. Home printers can make amazingly good prints in seconds straight from the camera. Labs can print digital images on the same paper that they use to print negatives and give the same durability, color and feel to your prints that you have always had. And those wishing to learn and improve their skills have the results right away. They can assess the changes to their image when they experiment with a new technique and know what works for them and what does not work.

In addition to the immediacy of the digital image, the digital media is reusable. Picture files can be deleted and more pictures can be taken on the blank card. The photographer is free to shoot as many pictures as necessary without adding to the cost. Only the best images need be printed. Cost savings on film and processing can easily offset the expense of new cameras and computers for the active professional.

Software packages such as Adobe Photoshop make the creative photographer able to push the limits beyond the capabilities of the tools that were available in the traditional wet darkroom. There are no practical limits on photo manipulation for the creative mind.

However, quality images still require proper photographic technique. Computer manipulation

of a technically flawed image will not result in a quality image. You can spend hours on the computer trying to fix what should have been "fixed" before the shutter was released. The new technologies available to the photographer of today will respond to the application of good technique equally as well as the processes of yesterday. The tools are the only things that have changed. The skills and vision of the photographer are still as important as they ever were.

A Quick Look Back

Tom Richey

Many of you may not realize that in addition to me, there are 3 former club presidents still active in the club today: Esther Prieto 1991, Tom Furlotte 92-94, and Bob Laster 05-06. I served from 95-97. The point of this is that there is still a lot of past experience that the club can tap into if needed. It was suggested to me, that having been in the club for a number of years as well as its' President for a while, that I write about the changes in the club during that time. When I joined the club in 1991 it was almost exclusively a slide club. They would have a print competition once or twice a year. Usually there were only a few prints entered.

Probably the single most dynamic change to all of that wasn't the election of Barry as President but the digital camera. When digital became affordable and cameras began to reproduce near the level of film it changed everything. Inexpensive printers and Photoshop just fueled the transition. As you see now, we just don't do slides anymore.

When I joined and while I was president and beyond the club membership was anywhere from 50 to 75 members. That remained fairly consistent until the latter part of the 1990's. For about the last 6 or 7 years it has been 100 or better. Today we see fewer members that do portraiture. That didn't used to be true. There was a time when the club had a large group of members that did portrait and wedding photography. Times change and there is nothing wrong with that. Who knows, we could see a gradual return to that sometime in the future. As you can see by the work that is presented each month for competition, we have a very talented membership. The quality of the work overall is much better that it was when I first became involved.

The one thing about the membership that hasn't changed is that we still know how to party. The Holiday party and the Awards ceremony were certainly proof of that. I have certainly enjoyed my time in the club. My close circle of friends is made up of club members. For those of you that are new to the club, I hope that you will come to enjoy it to the point that you will want to remain involved for many years to come. When I was president I used to tell everyone that I was the bus driver and it was they that determined where the club went. Don't be shy about being involved. Participate in the various committees. That is how you can have a positive impact on the club.

The MCC Marketplace

Lenses for Sale

Tamron 28-300 mm auto focus Ultra Zoom 3.5-6.3 with petal lens hood - \$150 (Nikon mount)

Tamron 70-300 mm auto focus 4-5.6 - \$100 (Nikon mount)

Nikon Digital 18-70 auto focus 3.5-4.5 wide angle zoom with petal lens hood - \$ 225

All lenses are in their original boxes and in excellent shape, however they are not new.

If interested call Beverly Hammond 685-1668 or 413-1688

2007 Awards Dinner

-Peggy Copen

This was a great 2007 year for the Memphis Camera Club. We had a big jump in membership, many well attended field trips and workshops, and first class programs and speakers. This led to outstanding competition entries swelling to record levels each month. The 2007 Annual Awards Dinner was a showcase of all the best entries and was judged by a select group of professional and regional non-club photographers. Each MCC member could enter up to six images that

had been in a monthly competition and one's they deemed to be their best works. The judges had a hard task selecting winners in each category and even awarded an unprecedented fourth place for the depth of talent in one category. Congratulations go out to all the members who submitted these outstanding images. Winners can be viewed on the MCC website. <http://memphiscameraclub.org/index.html>

The dinner this year was at Colettas. Festivities started at six with schmoozing, cocktails, and slide show viewing of the 2007 entries. Carl Nilson once again did a wonderful job of organizing the photographs in slide form. We had 2 slide shows. The first slide show had 148 numbered images that were viewed and voted on as people's choice award for their favorite shot. As a delicious dinner was served, the second slide show was shown with the photographer identity revealed. Dale Cox presented and Beverly Hammond handed out awards in each category. Print of the Year honors went to Ellen Cox's "A Fall Forest." Quinn Strother won the people's choice award, and a special plaque was given to Charlie Ritchie for the member showing the most improvement. A special MCC cake designed and decorated by Ann Moore topped off the evening.

Those who helped in the planning, decorating, and organizing of the event are to be commended for a wonderful evening. Everyone left with the inspiration to look for that next WOW shot.



2007 Year End Winners

SCENIC LANDSCAPE

A Fall Forest	Ellen Cox	1
Colors of Sunrise	Dale Cox	2
Falls Glory	Tony Menne	3
Otter Lake	Dorothy Bush	HM
Porters Creek	Dorothy Bush	HM
Crabtree Meadows	Dorothy Bush	HM
Old Sailors Quarter	Joe Sullivan	HM
Copenhagen	Joe Sullivan	HM
Maipo Morning	John Stitt	HM

NATURE

Early Morning Caution	Dale Cox	1
Silver and Gold	Ann Moore	2
On the Boy Scout Trail	Peggy Copen	3
White on White	Steve Copen	4
A Passion for Purple	Tony Menne	HM
First Flight, First Swim	Blair Ball	HM
Sculpted by Nature	Dale Cox	HM
Whoa, Red Snapper	Tom Richey	HM
Red Bellied Woodpecker	Joe Sullivan	HM
Hmmmmmm.....	Joe Sullivan	HM
The Conversation	Joe Sullivan	HM

PORTRAIT

Liz	Patti Possel	1
A Solitary Serenade	Beverly Hammond	2
Captivating	Beverly Hammond	3
Resonating Beauty	Patti Possel	HM

OPEN

Boat, Paddle & Net	John Stitt	1
Bow Wave	Dorothy Bush	2
Board Out of His Mind	Ann Moore	3
What am I	Brenda Silberman	4
Beale Street Diva	Peggy Copen	HM
The Red Door	Paul Fultz	HM
Stone Ground	Angie Menne	HM
Giving Thanks	Angie Menne	HM
Graceful Form, Sensuous Texture	Dale Cox	HM

CANDID PEOPLE

The Herbalist	Brenda Silberman	1
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Girl in the Red Dress	Barry Siegel	2
Connie with Fruit	John Stitt	3
Getting It From the Master	Ronnie Booze	HM
Goovin to the Music	Patti Possel	HM
Is My Hair a Mess	Beverly Hammond	HM
Swingin with my Shadow	Joe Sullivan	HM

CREATIVE MANIPULATED

Greenhouse Effect	Glenn Fuqua	1
Do Bears Dream	Steve Copen	2
Sleeping on Canvas	John Stitt	3
Angie's Heron	Barry Siegel	HM
Inspiration	Brenda Silberman	HM
Super Saturated Frog	Patty McLaughlin	HM

BLACK & WHITE

The Immortal Rescue	Ronnie Booze	1
Cool Mountain Stream	Dale Cox	2
Built to Last	Blair Ball	3
Freezing Twins	Ellen Cox	HM
Magnolia Symmetry	John Stitt	HM

IMAGE OF THE YEAR

A Fall Forest	Ellen Cox
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PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Patti Possel

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Tom Richey

MOST IMPROVED

Charlie Ritchie

Many thanks to Ann Moore
for her decoration of the
celebration cake for the
Year End Banquet!

